last act in Pskov. There was no point in her staying longer in the abandoned Commissariat. I would try to reach her again through the front headquarters.

Driving along the railroad, I found the munitions train. It had been delayed by the sabotage of the engineers, who pretended the locomotive had broken down. When I showed them the declaration of our task force, they admitted the locomotive could be repaired in two hours. After further discussion of the political situation, they conceded the repair might be completed in half an hour. Twenty minutes later the locomotive whistled and the train started toward Gatchina.

In Luga, things went smoothly enough at the beginning. I went to the local Soviet and complained to the chairman that several trains with our volunteers and munitions were detained in or around Luga. The chairman replied that if some regiments had stopped them, the Luga Soviet could do nothing—it was neutral. This led to a discussion about the meaning of neutrality. "The Luga Soviet," I insisted, "has committed the whole area under its control to neutrality. This means that volunteers of both parties must be permitted to pass through this area."

"Does it mean," the chairman asked, "that you, in Gatchina, will also let the Communists cross your lines on their way to Petrograd?"

"Of course not! We do not pretend to be neutral."

Finally the chairman agreed to send telegrams to all railroad stations and barracks around Luga, admonishing all whom it might concern to observe strict neutrality and abstain from interfering with the movement—in either direction—of volunteers and munitions trains. The chairman warned me, however, that he could not enforce the order since the Military Revolutionary Committee disputed the Luga Soviet's authority in military matters.

On the highway between Luga and Pskov a patrol stopped my car, explaining that they were ordered to deliver suspects to the Military Revolutionary Committee. I objected that their order could not refer to me. "I am not a 'suspect,' but Commissar of the All-Russian Executive Committee." The soldiers apologized. "Maybe you are okay, Comrade Commissar, but we are ordered to suspect everybody." I insisted, "You are mixed up, brothers. I have just come from your Soviet, where the chairman told me Luga was neutral." One of the soldiers remarked, "Maybe we are mixed up. Maybe we are neutral. Who knows? But we must deliver you to the Revolutionary Committee." He confessed, however, that he did not know where the committee's quarters was. "Don't worry, comrade," he comforted me. "We will find out."

It took time to find the committee. When we found it, its chairman declared that he was new in politics and did not know what neutrality